

# News Release



Allied Maritime  
Command Headquarters  
Northwood  
[www.manw.nato.int](http://www.manw.nato.int)



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## NATO Warship Helps to Free Captured Vessel

**London:** Over the weekend Turkish Warship TCG Giresun, operating as part of NATO's counter piracy mission Operation Ocean Shield, boarded and freed a dhow that had been previously been hijacked by pirates, and was now being used as a pirate mothership.

Earlier, merchant vessel, MV Vienna Express had reported that she had come under attack by pirates, with the mothership dhow loitering nearby. The Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) directed one of her Maritime Reconnaissance and Patrol aircraft (MPRA) to locate the dhow and NATO warship TCG Giresun also raced to the scene of the attack.

Having successfully located the dhow, TCG Giresun's boarding team made an approach. The dhow crew were cooperative and allowed the Turkish Navy team to carry out a full inspection of the vessel. During the search one of the crew confessed to be being a pirate and revealed a hidden compartment which contained a number of weapons. The weapons were seized and the pirates were held on board the dhow for further investigation.

"This swift action immediately after the attack on the merchant vessel shows the importance of good cooperation between the merchant community, CMF and NATO forces in counter piracy. Another pirate action group has been taken from the sea". Commodore Hijmans said after the action.

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Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2)

## **Background Information:**

NATO has contributed to the international counter piracy effort off the Horn of Africa since December 2008. The mission has expanded from escorting UN and World Food Programme Shipping under Operation Allied Provider and protecting merchant traffic in the Gulf of Aden under Operation Allied Protector. In addition to these activities and as part of the latest mission, Operation Ocean Shield, NATO is working with other international bodies to help develop capacity of countries in the region to tackle piracy on their own.

Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 is permanently assigned to NATO. It is a multi-national Naval Group that provides the NATO Alliance with the ability to quickly respond to crisis situations anywhere in the world. A capable, stand-alone task group and one of four standing maritime elements that form a flexible core around which NATO can build a larger force to meet a wide range of missions that will include non-combatant evacuations, consequence management, counter terrorism, crisis response, embargo operations, etc.

NATO has announced its continuing commitment to counter-piracy by extending Operation Ocean Shield to December 2012.

NATO Forces currently in Operation Ocean Shield:

- HNLMS TROMP (Flagship) - Netherlands
- USS BAINBRIDGE - United States of America
- HDMS ESBERN SNARE - Denmark
- TCG GIRESUN – Turkey
- USS STEPHEN W GROVES – Unites States of America

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# Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2)